SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Oyster recruitment was generally greater along the eastern edge of Pamlico Sound and in Core Sound in the high salinity sites, compared to the low salinity sites along the western side of Pamlico Sound. Recruitment was also less at shallow depths where mats were located immediately adjacent to the shore, compared to deeper depths located some distance from shore. Finally, recruitment was greater to bottom surfaces of shells.

Oyster recruitment undergoes enormous variation in space and time, but seems to have declined in recent years along the western edge of Pamlico Sound.

Spat density in the fall reflected patterns in the intensity of recruitment. Thus, greater numbers of spat were found on the bottom surfaces of shells, deeper locations, and at sites where recruitment was highest. However, in many instances fall spat densities were reduced by the presence of other sessile organisms and the degree of sedimentation.

All sites included here appear to have similar potential for growth.